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**INDIGENOUS  
IMPAC 5**   
**AUTOCHTONES**

# Indigenous IMPAC5 Outcomes Report

Prepared by Alderhill Planning Inc.

March 8, 2023



This report was prepared by Alderhill Planning Inc. following the coordination and delivery of a number of Indigenous activities that took place during the fifth International Marine Protected Areas Congress (IMPAC5) from February 3rd to February 8th, 2023.

Questions about this report, or about Indigenous IMPAC5 activities can be emailed to [kate@alderhill.ca](mailto:kate@alderhill.ca).



# Background

IMPAC5, the Fifth International Marine Protected Areas Congress, was a global forum that brought together ocean conservation professionals and high-level officials to inform, inspire and act on ocean conservation through marine protected areas.

Hosted on x<sup>w</sup>məθk<sup>w</sup>əyəm (Musqueam), Sḵw̓x̓wú7mesh (Squamish), and səliłwətał (Tsleil-Waututh) territory (Vancouver, BC) from February 3 to 9, 2023, IMPAC5 presented an opportunity for marine protected area professionals from around the world to chart a course towards protecting 30% of the ocean by 2030. The five themes of IMPAC5 were:

- Building a global marine protected area network
- Advancing conservation in the blue economy
- Actively managing marine protected areas and human activity
- Conserving biodiversity and addressing the climate crisis
- Connecting ocean culture and human well-being

## About Indigenous IMPAC5

Indigenous IMPAC5 refers to a series of Indigenous-specific activities and events that took place at IMPAC5 from February 3 to 8, 2023 on x<sup>w</sup>məθk<sup>w</sup>əyəm (Musqueam), Sḵw̓x̓wú7mesh (Squamish), and səliłwətał (Tsleil-Waututh) territory, Vancouver, BC.

Indigenous IMPAC5 activities were open to all delegates who identify as Indigenous or who represent an Indigenous Nation, government, or organization.

Developed by the IMPAC5 Indigenous Working Group, Indigenous IMPAC5 events and activities were intended to complement and enhance the programming of the overall IMPAC5 Congress, and the experience of Indigenous participants. The planning for Indigenous IMPAC5 began in October 2021 in anticipation of a September 2022 Congress. The planning process was extended due to the postponement of IMPAC5 from September 2022 to February 2023.

Coordination of Indigenous IMPAC5 was led by Alderhill Planning, with event management support from Naut'sa mawt Event Management. Indigenous IMPAC5 was funded by the Department of Fisheries and Oceans Canada, Coastal First Nations, Environment Funders Canada, and the Assembly of First Nations.

Over 450 number of attendees at IMPAC5 identified as Indigenous or represented an Indigenous Nation, government, or organisation.

## IMPAC5 Indigenous Working Group

Established in the summer of 2021, the Indigenous Working Group brought together Indigenous marine specialists and representatives from Indigenous Nations and organizations with experience in marine protection initiatives including marine protected areas.

The purpose of the Indigenous Working Group was to develop and organize culturally appropriate and inclusive Indigenous-led events and activities at IMPAC5 in the fulfillment of three goals:

- Creating opportunities for Indigenous participants at IMPAC5 to network, share, and learn from one another about Indigenous marine protection approaches and initiatives worldwide;
- Supporting Indigenous participants at IMPAC5 to coordinate and strategize for relevant elements of the regular conference program (e.g. resolutions); and,

- Highlighting local Indigenous Peoples and approaches to marine protection and stewardship.

The Indigenous Working Group included representatives from:

- Musqueam Indian Band
- Tsleil-Waututh Nation
- Squamish Nation
- The Assembly of First Nations
- The Inuit Circumpolar Council
- Uu-a-thluk Nuu-chah-nulth Tribal Council Fisheries Program
- Coastal First Nations Great Bear Initiative
- First Nations Fisheries Council of BC

A series of events and activities, were offered to Indigenous delegates and those representing Indigenous Nations and organizations. These were intended to complement and enhance the programming of the overall IMPAC5 Congress, and the experience for Indigenous participants.

## The Indigenous Leadership Committee

At the direction of the Indigenous Working Group, the Indigenous Leadership Committee was formed to act as conveners and play a leading role as active participants at the IMPAC5 Leadership Forum. The Indigenous Leadership Committee participated in the one day Indigenous caucus and dinner event, engaging and liaising with Indigenous Congress participants. The Indigenous Leadership Committee collated and communicated Indigenous interests and recommendations from the caucus and dinner event and ensured that they were brought forward at the Leadership Forum.

The Indigenous Leadership Committee members are:

- Dr. Judith Sayers, President of the Nuu-chah-nulth Tribal Council
- Christine Smith-Martin, CEO Coastal First Nations - Great Bear Initiative
- Richard Paton, Senior Director of Projects - The Qikiqtani Inuit Association (QIA)



# Planning Process

## Coastal First Nations - Great Bear Initiative

Coastal First Nations - Great Bear Initiative (CFN-GBI) became involved with IMPAC5 in early 2021 and received funding from the Department of Fisheries and Oceans to coordinate the Indigenous Working Group and plan Indigenous specific activities.

CFN-GBI provided a link between the funder (DFO) and contractor (Alderhill Planning Inc.) for the Indigenous Content at IMPAC5. This included:

- Contract development and overall budget considerations.
- Participating in Indigenous Working Group Meetings and IMPAC5 Planning Committee Meetings.
- Providing guidance and support when needed to Alderhill Planning in the execution of the contract deliverables.

## Alderhill Planning Inc.

Alderhill is an Indigenous-owned planning firm of diverse facilitators, planners, artists, and systems thinkers who utilize planning as a tool for self-determination. Alderhill planners and facilitators use culturally appropriate trauma-informed, participatory methods to ensure that our projects centre Indigenous voices and empower participants.

Alderhill, under contract to CFN-GBI, provided coordination support to the Indigenous Working Group and overall project management. This included:

- Working to create a safe, supportive meeting space.
- Scheduling virtual meetings and sending meeting invitations and agendas.
- Providing technology required for remote attendance and virtual meetings.
- Keeping high-level, record-of-decision meeting minutes to be circulated to members after each meeting.
- Conducting research or providing contracted research services to inform the Indigenous Working Group discussions and decisions.
- Maintaining regular and prompt correspondence with IMPAC5 Secretariat staff to exchange information and update on progress and planning of Indigenous events and activities.
- Coordinating Indigenous IMPAC5 activities, under the direction of the Indigenous Working Group.

## Indigenous Working Group

The Indigenous Working Group advised on the direction and planning of the Indigenous content at IMPAC5. This included:

- Attending regular Indigenous Working Group meetings (monthly, with additional meetings being added as needed) over Zoom.
- Leveraging networks to identify Indigenous presenters, performers, suppliers, etc.
- Providing strategic advice regarding objectives, planning, and implementation for Indigenous-focused elements at IMPAC5.
- Providing support for on-site activities during IMPAC5.

All Indigenous Working Group members were compensated through direct grants and contributions agreements with DFO. They received additional compensation for an extended planning timeline when IMPAC5 was postponed by six months.

# Overview of Indigenous IMPAC5 Activities and Spaces

## Indigenous Caucus

Friday, February 3, 2023 | 8:30am – 2:30pm

The Indigenous IMPAC5 Caucus, was a facilitated session that provided an opportunity for Indigenous delegates to network and strategize on several important topics relating to Indigenous-led marine conservation.

The Caucus was held on Friday, February 3, 2023 from 8:30am to 2:00pm PST at the Vancouver Convention Centre, West Building, Ballroom A. Complimentary breakfast, lunch, and coffee and tea service was provided. There was no additional cost to attend this event; however, pre-registration was required for participation.



### Objectives of the Caucus:

1. To provide a knowledge sharing and networking opportunity for IMPAC5 delegates who self-identify as Indigenous or represent an Indigenous government, community, or organization; and,
2. To generate draft recommendations relevant to the IMPAC5 Leadership Forum, for the Indigenous Leadership Committee to take forward.

### Format of the Caucus:

The facilitation team for the caucus used a format called ‘Open-Space’. This meeting format allows participants to identify and focus on the issues most important to them in self-organized, self-facilitated small groups. In this format:

- Participants put forward topics (framed as questions) that they want to talk about and a location is selected for that small group.
- After building the agenda in this way, all participants disperse into groups of their choosing.
- Groups work to develop recommendations to be brought back to plenary, or simply network and share information

### Outcomes

- **340** registrants, **216** attendees.
- **26** topics were put forward by participants for discussion in small groups, ranging from in-depth discussions on Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas, to sharing stories around the reclamation of food sovereignty.
- **42** informal recommendations drafted for the Indigenous Leadership Committee to bring to the IMPAC5 Leadership Forum.
- Countless connections made, knowledge passed, and stories shared.

“..the interaction with other indigenous groups was something that also made this congress stand out”

- Indigenous Leadership Committee Member

# Indigenous IMPAC5 Welcome Booth

Located at the main entrance of IMPAC5, the Indigenous IMPAC5 welcome booth was a place for Indigenous delegates to get more information about Indigenous-specific programming at IMPAC5. A staff person was at the booth every morning to answer questions and provide directions. Indigenous IMPAC5 pins were handed out at the welcome booth to all Indigenous IMPAC5 delegates.



## Outcomes

- **400+** Indigenous IMPAC5 enamel pins were handed out to Indigenous IMPAC5 delegates to support identification to other Indigenous delegates.
- **217** QR code scans to the Indigenous [IMPAC5 Welcome Package](#).
- **133** QR code scans to the [alderhill.ca/IMPAC5](http://alderhill.ca/IMPAC5) webpage for up-to-date Indigenous IMPAC5 information.

# Indigenous Lounge

**Saturday, February 4 to Wednesday, February 8 | 8:00am - 5:30pm**

The Indigenous Lounge was a dedicated quiet space where Indigenous-identifying delegates could rest, enjoy grounding activities, access cultural support, medicines, and refreshments away from the larger congress events and activities. Healthy snacks were offered morning and afternoon. Indigenous youth volunteered in the lounge each day to welcome folks to the room, answer questions, and keep the lounge tidy.

A smudge ceremony was hosted each morning at 8:15am for Indigenous IMPAC5 delegates to ground themselves, set good intentions for the day, and release any troubles or anxieties that may be weighing on them. A closing prayer was offered at 5:15pm each evening.

Elder Ray Thunderchild offered cultural support and good conversation each afternoon in the Lounge.

A number of traditional plant medicines were generously donated by x<sup>w</sup>cičəsəm Garden, also known as the UBC Indigenous Health Research and Education Garden. All of the medicines were grown on site on ancestral x<sup>w</sup>məθk<sup>w</sup>əyəm (Musqueam) territory.

## Outcomes

- Approximately 40 participants visited the Indigenous lounge daily

“This space was exactly what I needed”

- Indigenous Lounge guest

# Indigenous Networking Space

**Saturday, February 4 to Wednesday, February 8 | 8:00am - 5:30pm**

The Indigenous Networking Space was a dedicated area for delegates who identify as Indigenous or represent an Indigenous Nation, government, or organization to meet with their fellow delegates, connect about what was shared through the congress, and network. Large moveable whiteboards were set up for small groups to use in their informal meetings. Coffee and tea was made available nearby throughout the day.

# Indigenous IMPAC5 Pavilion

Saturday, February 4, to Tuesday, February 7 | 12:00pm - 7:00pm

The Indigenous IMPAC5 Pavilion, located in the Expo Hall, was a large (40x60 square foot) interactive space with 38 panels that highlighted case studies featuring themes of Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas, Indigenous-led conservation, habitat restoration, Nation-led monitoring, traditional knowledge, and collaborative governance alongside an overview of the Host Nations. The pavilion featured art by local Indigenous artists Ts'kanchtn (Calvin Charlie-Dawson) and Kelly Cannell. QR codes were used on the Pavilion panels and signage to provide more information on the case studies and cultural iconography.

Each day between 12:00pm and 2:30pm knowledge keepers and storytellers were present at the Indigenous Pavilion to share about local cultures and practices. Beau Wagner, an artist and woodworker, specializing in Coast Salish dugout canoes, masks, and bentwood boxes painted and carved a racing paddle at the pavilion throughout the week; this paddle was later presented to Elder Deanna George at the Indigenous Banquet Tracy, Sesemiya, from the Squamish Nation displayed a number of traditional tools and shared about her knowledge in the art of fish skin leather; tool making; deer hide tanning; basketry; natural dyes and mountain goat wool weaving.

## Outcomes

- 190 scans of the 16 QR codes throughout the Indigenous IMPAC5 Pavilion.

“The Pavillion was gorgeous, and many of our partners were excited to see the panel and take selfies with pride!”

- Pavilion Case Study Contributor





# Indigenous Banquet

Tuesday, February 7, 2023 | 6:30pm – 9:30pm

The Indigenous IMPAC5 Banquet was an opportunity for IMPAC5 delegates who identify as Indigenous or represent an Indigenous Nation, government, or organization, to gather, network, and celebrate with a plated three-course dinner and cultural performances. The purpose of this banquet was to give folks an opportunity to learn more about the cultures of the Host Nations while networking and celebrating towards the end of IMPAC5.

The Banquet was held on Tuesday, February 7th, 2023 from 6:30pm to 9:30pm PST at the Vancouver Convention Centre, West Building, Ballroom A. Tickets were sold at \$50 with options for a 50% subsidy and full sponsorship for those who requested one.

The three course plated meal highlighted local foods including BC organic mushrooms, steelhead salmon, and featured bannock made by a local Indigenous company, Salishan Catering.



## Outcomes

- **300** registrants, **240** attendees
- **4** groups of banquet guests shared cultural songs and teachings
- Countless connections made, knowledge passed, and stories shared

“Thank you, that evening was very beautifully set out, the food was awesome (especially the Bannock), the songs were special also and the way the host first Nations families welcomed us, we are very thankful.”

- Banquet Guest

“We are so privileged to be part of this Indigenous IMPAC5. We are from Papua New Guinea coming in as one team from Western Pacific. We made our country citizens proud.”

- Banquet Guest





# Outcomes

## Successes

### Overall Indigenous representation and visibility at IMPAC5

There were over X number of Indigenous participants at IMPAC5. Having a number of Indigenous events as part of Indigenous IMPAC5, in addition to other Indigenous-led side events, and a strong presence from Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh at the IMPAC5 Opening and Closing Ceremonies created a strong and very visible Indigenous presence throughout the Congress. Furthermore, highlighting Indigenous participation at IMPAC5 through communications and marketing early on in the planning process helped to ensure Indigenous folks from around the world were aware that there would be a significant amount of Indigenous-specific content and activities taking place at IMPAC5.

“The visibility of Indigenous Peoples at IMPAC5 was meaningful, more than at other conferences”

- Indigenous Working Group Member

### Indigenous Working Group Coordination

Having regularly scheduled monthly meetings with the Indigenous Working Group supported effective advising and direction leading up to IMPAC5. Alderhill developed an agenda in advance to make efficient use of Indigenous Working Group members’ time, bringing forward proposals, options, and questions for their recommendations. All decisions made for Indigenous IMPAC5 activities were guided by the advice of Indigenous Working Group members, from what should be featured in the pavilion to the overarching objectives of the Indigenous Caucus. The Alderhill team was able to take this clear direction into the coordination and planning of Indigenous IMPAC5 activities, with opportunities to report-back at each monthly meeting.

At an IMPAC5 debrief meeting on March 1, 2023, Indigenous Working Group members shared that the coordination provided by Alderhill Planning greatly supported their participation. Members appreciated the opportunities to connect with and learn from others from different regions about similar marine protection issues. Members also shared that the size of the group allowed for consistent participation over time, the monthly meeting structure was effective, and that they benefited from clear timelines and specific requests provided by Alderhill throughout the planning process.

“This was one of the best functioning working groups I’ve participated in”

- Indigenous Working Group Member

### Partnership with an external event management company

Alderhill developed a good working relationship with the team hired at Naut’sa mawt Events Management (NEM). NEM provided logistical support on the pavilion build and graphic design services, in addition to liaising with the Vancouver Convention Centre (IMPAC5 venue) on items such as catering, furniture, and AV for the caucus, banquet, and Indigenous lounge. They also identified and coordinated additional subcontractors such as decor, banquet performers, and pavilion activators. Having event professionals with experience managing these areas allowed the Alderhill team to focus on overall project management and communications, strategic decision making, liaising with the IMPAC5 Secretariat, event facilitation, and working closely with the Indigenous Working Group.

# Good working relationship with the IMPAC5 Secretariat, Indigenous Liaison Team

win the Summer of 2021. Alderhill planners maintained a close working relationship with Lisa and Alejandra throughout the year, meeting every other week (more as needed), to touch base on overall planning of Indigenous events at IMPAC5. This proved to be incredibly effective and allowed both Alderhill and IMPAC5 to successfully execute a number of Indigenous-specific events and activities.

## Indigenous IMPAC5 activities, including:

### Indigenous Caucus

The demand to attend the Indigenous Caucus outweighed the seating capacity, demonstrating a strong interest from Indigenous delegates at IMPAC5 to connect, network, and strategize with one another. The Open Space facilitation format for the Caucus proved to be an effective way of organizing a large group of people with varying interests and objectives for the session. The Alderhill facilitation team supported Indigenous self-determination by enabling participants to co-design the agenda and choose what conversations they wanted to be a part of. As a result, several groups contributed valuable draft recommendations for the Indigenous Leadership Committee to bring to the Leadership Forum while other groups created space for storytelling and knowledge sharing.

“It was valuable to have Nation states, researchers, and organizations all in one room, rather than in silos”

- Indigenous Working Group Member

“The Caucus was energizing and set up some great networking opportunities right away at IMPAC5”

- Indigenous Working Group Member

### Indigenous Banquet

The sold-out Banquet was well-received and enjoyed by those who attended. Despite a last minute cancellation of our keynote speaker, the Alderhill team adapted the agenda by sending out an invitation to participants the night before with an invitation to share songs or cultural teachings from their home territories. This “open-mic” portion of the evening was a highlight for many, and demonstrated the importance of being flexible and the deep value of creating space for this kind of cultural sharing. Participants and Indigenous Working Group Members shared that this was a beautiful and important opportunity for connection.

### Indigenous Lounge

The lounge space was well-used, with approximately 40 people accessing the space each day. The Alderhill team received a lot of positive feedback on the space, including one person who shared that it was a safe space to bring her children, rest, and process the day. The lounge also created space for emergence around culture and ceremony, where Indigenous delegates invited one another to gather and share.

Indigenous Working Group members expressed that this should be a new standard across these kinds of large conferences.

### Indigenous Pavilion

The pavilion featured Indigenous-led marine conservation initiatives from across Canada and internationally, providing a broader reach and facilitating opportunities for shared learning. Each day there was a pavilion “activator” present in the space, Indigenous artists who shared their work and cultural teachers. In particular, having the person who carved the canoe stationed in the pavilion present was of great value for those visiting the space. These pavilion activators spent their time sharing about their work and making connections with one another and with IMPAC5 delegates.

# Lessons Learned

## Scoping and Budgeting

The scope of the work for Indigenous IMPAC5 continually evolved due to increasing asks from both the IMPAC5 Secretariat and the Indigenous Working Group, in addition to the six month extension of the project. As a result, flexibility was necessary and several budget amendments were required in order to adapt to the changing circumstances. Additionally, there were several costs associated with the venue that were not provided until shortly before the Congress, making it challenging to budget accurately ahead of time. Consequently, fees were higher than anticipated in some areas and required last minute adjustments where possible to avoid going over budget.

## Accessibility

Following the last minute requests received for translation services at Indigenous IMPAC5 events, the Alderhill team recognized that more consideration could have been made on the diversity of participants and their accessibility needs. For example, providing language translation services and document translation in both Spanish and French in some instances.

For youth, particularly Indigenous Youth, while we were able to accommodate all requests for banquet ticket sponsorship and caucus attendance, we would advise next time to set aside a number of dedicated spots for participation recognizing that not all information gets to the right folks on time to request tickets.

## Due Diligence

During IMPAC5, we were informed by a member of a First Nation that one of the replica totem poles stationed in the pavilion were not used with permission. Alderhill and NEM, who sourced the poles from an Indigenous decor provider, were under the assumption that there had been due diligence with appropriate permissions from the relevant Nations by the decor company. As an immediate step during the Congress, the Alderhill team removed the signage associating the replica poles with any Nation. Following IMPAC5, the Alderhill team has gathered more information from the owner of the decor company who provided the totem poles and are in direct contact with representatives from the Nation to ensure proper follow-up and next steps, including an apology letter.

## Collaboration

While there were some efforts to connect with the IMPAC5 Young Professionals Committee to support alignment with the Indigenous Working Group, there should have been more work done in this regard. In hindsight, it would have been valuable to designate a spot on the Indigenous Working Group for an Indigenous member of the Young Professionals Committee. This would have helped ensure that Indigenous IMPAC5 activities and opportunities for involvement were well-communicated to all Indigenous youth attending the Congress.

## Indigenous Identity and Intersectionality

In planning Indigenous events for an international congress of this scale, we encountered the limits of our vocabulary relating to Indigeneity. While the term “Indigenous” is clear in a Canadian and North-American context, its use can be limited for other populations. We learned that some folks, particularly those from African Nations, don’t identify as being Indigenous but whose lived experience and work aligns them with the participants and goals of Indigenous IMPAC5. To address this challenge, we referred to the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues Fact Sheet, which offers a broader understanding of the term in our external communications and registration. However there remained instances where folks reached out directly to ask if they were able to participate in Indigenous IMPAC5 activities.

In our Indigenous IMPAC5 debrief with the Indigenous Working Group, there was also some reflection on the need for an increased awareness of intersectionality when planning large events such as IMPAC5. In planning future activities, it will be important to acknowledge and understand that Indigeneity exists in unique and simultaneous relationship to experiences of other social categories (i.e. gender, age, socioeconomic status, etc.), and not in a silo.